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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: O. IMAICHI, et al
Serial No.: 09/942,905
Filed: August 31, 2001
For: DOCUMENT RETRIEVAL SYSTEM AND SEARCH SERVER
Group: 2162
Examiner: A. Ly

RESPONSE AFTER FINAL - EXPEDITED
PROCEDURE UNDER 37 CFR 1.116

MS AF
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
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Sir:

November 14, 2005

The present application has pending claims 1-23.

Claims 1-3, 6-8, 10-18 and 21-23 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Paulsen (U.S. Patent 6,078,917) in view of Abe (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0047351); and claims 4, 5, 9, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Paulsen in view of Abe and further in view of Kirsch (U.S. Patent No. 6,018,733). These rejections are traversed for the following reasons. Applicants submit that the features of the present invention as now more clearly recited in claims 1-23 are not taught or suggested by Paulson, Abe or Kirsch whether taken individually or in combination with each other as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw these rejections.

The present invention is directed to a server which is capable of instructing a document search by specifying a document database j to be searched next among a plurality of document databases based on a search result generated from a previous search of a document database i and an associative search recording table which records the number of times x_{ij} of searching said document database j based on the search results generated from the previous searches of said document database i .

The above described features of the present invention as recited in the claims allows a database that is to be searched next to be selected from a list of document databases that have been appropriately rearranged in accordance with a search result, thus enabling the search to be performed with enhanced convenience. This feature of the present invention also provides the effect that the utility of a document database can be evaluated so as to allow for more appropriate calculation of registration fees or commissions. See page 15, line 36 to page 16, line 5 and page 11, lines 27-31 of the present application.

The above described features of the present invention as clearly recited in the claims are not taught or suggested by Paulsen, Abe or Kirsch whether taken individually or in combination with each other as suggested by the Examiner.

Paulsen teaches a system and method of retrieving documents from a document database according to a search statement. Specifically, Paulsen teaches extracting a verb contained in a search result and developing a signature so as facilitate the users' adapted feedback. The Examiner's attention is directed to the abstract and Fig. 5 of Paulsen.

Abe is directed to apparatus and method for searching document information by using a server in response to a search request from a client and responding. As taught by Abe when a document file is designated as a search condition, contents of the designated file are transmitted via a network and a document search unit of a search missing forms a keyword from the file contents and searches similar documents from an index in the search database. Thus, Abe teaches searching a database for documents similar to a particular document that is registered in the search database.

Kirsch teaches a method and apparatus of selecting the likely most relevant database collections for document searching in an ad hoc query where each of the databases includes a plurality of documents. In Kirsch, a database to be searched is determined by means of a predetermined search query when there are multiple databases that can be searched. Kirsch further teaches calculating access fees when a fee-based database has been searched, for example, in col. 1, lines 55-63 and in col. 2, lines 10-20.

However, it is quite clear from the above described teachings of Paulsen, Abe and Kirsch that neither of said references teach or suggest the above described features of the present invention regarding an associative search recording table which records the number of times x_{ij} of searching said document database j based on the search results generated from the previous searches of said document database i . The recording search table of the present invention as recited in the claims allows a search to be conducted with enhanced convenience and makes it possible to evaluate the utility of a document database, so that the calculation of

registration fees or commissions can be made properly. Such advantages are not possible in the references of record.

Thus, Paulsen, Abe and Kirsch fails to teach or suggest an associate search recording table which records the number of times x_{ij} of searching the database j based on the search results generated from the previous searches of the document database i as recited in the claims.

With regard to Kirsch, calculations described in the specified passages of the reference merely involve those for a case where a fee-based database has been searched. Such calculations are not based on the number of times x_{ij} the document database is searched and recording such in the search of recording table, as in the present invention as recited in the claims.

Therefore, since each of the above noted references Paulsen, Abe and Kirsch suffers from the same deficiencies relative to the features of the present invention as recited in the claims, combining such references in the manner suggested by the Examiner in the Office Action still fails to teach or suggest the features of the present invention as now more clearly recited in the claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC §103(a) rejections of claims 1-23 as being unpatentable over Paulsen in combination with one or more of Abe and Kirsch is respectfully requested.


The remaining references of record have been studied. Applicants submit that they do not supply any of the deficiencies noted above with respect to the references utilized in the rejection of claims 1-23.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants submit that claims 1-23 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 1-23 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (1021.40599X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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